

not work, but Democrats and Republicans must work together to act and pass solutions. We must have, if you will, a conservation day, 1 day that you are on public transportation or bicycles; taxes on the excessive CEO salaries, how much can they spend? We must have, of course, a tax on the outrageous profits of the energy companies, but, more importantly, that tax can be used as a rebate, a one-time \$10 rebate to those families who are at a certain income; review of the release of barrels from the petroleum reserve; Congressional hearings on the allegation of price gouging; the FTC, the Federal Trade Commission, must be out in the field doing a national survey on gas prices, an assessment of the market, analyzing the exploiting of political issues like Iraq and Iran.

The President must take leadership. Government incentives for domestic production of ethanol and town hall meetings will be held in my district, and also we must do exploration in the gulf. Outrageous gas prices require us to act.

#### A TRIBUTE TO SPECIALIST MARK W. MELCHER

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Madam Speaker, I rise with a somber mood to recognize a citizen, a patriot, a soldier who gave his life for a cause he believed in serving his country as a soldier in Iraq.

Mark Melcher lived in Pittsburgh his entire life. He grew up on the north side watching the Steelers, Pirates and Penguins play, and graduated the from North Catholic High School in 1989. Soon afterwards, he joined the Army. He served in Operation Desert Storm in Kuwait.

Following the 1991 conflict to liberate Kuwait, Mark returned home to begin working at the Mellon Financial Corporation. He then served in the National Guard's 1st Battalion, 103rd Armored Division located in Friedens, in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Mark departed for military training on the morning of Sunday, February 5th. Sadly, on April 15, 2006, just a month after arriving in theater, Mark was killed when his tank he manned came under fire outside of Baghdad. He was 34 years old. He is survived by his parents, Kathy and John Melcher, Sr., of Ross, Pennsylvania. I commend the deepest sympathies of all Members of this House to the Melcher family.

Also I offer the gratitude of every American. We should never forget his devotion of duty, his love of country. Today and every day let us give thanks to Mark Melcher, his family, and indeed all of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and the marines.

John Melcher, Sr., Mark's father, said of Mark, my son believed in the cause, he loved his country, gave his life for his country. You don't get any

better than that. Yes, sir, Mr. Melcher, you do not get any better than that.

#### ESCALATING GAS PRICES

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, as every other Member, I have just returned from my congressional district, which includes a major part of the Dallas metropolitan area, and they have some of the highest gas prices in the Nation.

Recent reports revealed that gas prices have shot up nearly 25 cents per gallon over the past 2 weeks. In December of 2003, gas averaged \$1.50 a gallon. Now gas is reaching \$3 a gallon. While I agree that supply-and-demand forces are part of the reason behind the escalating gas prices, I also believe that price gouging is a fundamental problem.

Congress must act and enact innovative policies such as windfall profit tax on the gas companies and greater investments in alternative fuels, fuel efficiency, even public transportation.

Madam Speaker, I urge the Republican leadership to stop the rhetoric and start thinking about the real change.

#### SALUTING THE LEADERSHIP OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, as a 31-year veteran of the Army National Guard and the father of three serving in the military today, I greatly appreciate the military successes that have been achieved under the leadership of Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Secretary Rumsfeld has worked tirelessly in the global war on terrorism and led our troops to liberate 25 million people in Afghanistan, defeat Saddam Hussein's enormous Army in 18 days, train over 250,000 Iraqi security forces, capture countless terrorists, and further the greatest spread of freedom in the history of the world.

House and Senate Democrats promised a substantive national security policy over a month ago, but they continue to practice the strategy of retreat and defeat, which does not protect our country.

Fortunately, Secretary Rumsfeld and the U.S. military remain committed to fighting terrorists in Iraq, Afghanistan and worldwide so that we do not have to face them on the streets of America.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

#### BUSH PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAX—TWENTY DAYS LEFT UNTIL TAX TAKES PLACE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, the countdown continues. If neither the Bush administration nor this Congress act within the next 20 days, seniors who have yet to sign up for the new prescription drug plan will be penalized with a Bush prescription drug tax that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

It is bad enough that the new prescription drug plan is so confusing and complicated that a vast majority of seniors have yet to sign up, but now, if seniors choose a drug plan after May 15, they will be penalized with a tax that will only make their prescription drug costs higher.

The Bush administration refuses to extend the deadline, even though they have heard recent reports of seniors waiting on the phone as long as 30 minutes to get more information on these private drug plans.

If House Republicans do not join us in extending this unfair deadline, seniors will encounter at least a 7 percent Bush prescription drug tax that they will be forced to pay every month for the rest of their lives.

As we check off another day on the calendar, House Republicans now only have another 20 more days to stand up and support America's seniors. It is time Republicans do the right thing.

#### GASOLINE PRICES—SOBER ACTION DEMANDED

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, talk is cheap, and gas prices aren't. With summertime right around the corner, Americans are making plans to pack up their car and hit the road for a summer vacation. However, this year gas prices are putting a damper on those summer plans.

The President and most Members of Congress appreciate something the American people know well, America has an addiction to oil. But higher gas prices today are the product of many different factors, including governmental regulation and heightened worldwide demand. Here at home we are best able to adapt by using tools at our disposal.

In the weeks ahead, Congress must continue to act on behalf of the American people by providing incentives for energy conservation and the development of alternative energy sources. We should expand our domestic oil production, including building new refineries and expanding current ones. Above all, Members of Congress cannot talk about the rise in energy prices and then say "no" to reforms when it comes time to vote.

Right now, talk, not oil, is cheap. Shortsighted solutions will not be effective. I urge my colleagues to work together on behalf of all Americans. Our Nation certainly has the will to evolve our actions and the capability to meet these challenges.

#### HONORING THE CAREER OF DAN PIERCECCHI

(Mr. McCOTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McCOTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the career of a gentleman I have known for almost 20 years, Mr. Dan Piercecchi, who will be receiving a lifetime achievement award.

Dan has dedicated his life to public service throughout Michigan, having served on the Inkster Parks and Recreation Commission and then being elected to the Inkster City Council. He has also served on the Livonia Planning Commission and is currently a proponent and a champion of municipal government throughout America.

He is also a very dedicated activist to our own Grand Old Party, and he was one of the first people I ever met when I became involved in politics. He has the wisdom, sagacity, and tenacity of an old bull, and this young bull would like to thank him very much for the example he set of what one of man of integrity can do to move mountains.

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#### FREE ACT

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, crude oil prices have exceeded previous records set after Hurricane Katrina, reaching over \$75 a barrel. This summer, Americans are expected to pay significantly more at the pump than last summer. In the meantime, oil companies continue to rake in record profits.

During five town hall meetings I held in Michigan in the past 2 weeks, the price of gasoline was the most troubling for my constituents. There are currently no Federal laws against price gouging. The only way the Federal Trade Commission can even attempt to prosecute unfair pricing is through antitrust and antimonopoly laws. To date, the FTC has never brought a gas price gouging case to court.

Recently, President Bush ordered an investigation into gas prices. However, because the Federal Government does not have a clear definition of what price gouging is, the FTC can do little more than study the issues. But we have had enough studies. Last September, I introduced a bill to increase the Federal Government's ability to prosecute price gougers. My bill, the

Federal Response to Energy Emergencies Act, FREE Act, will provide the FTC and the Department of Justice with the authority to investigate and to prosecute those who engage in predatory pricing, from oil companies down to distributors, with an emphasis on those who profit most.

The FREE Act will also allow State attorneys general to investigate unfair pricing practices. This includes the gouging of gasoline, home heating oil, and natural gas. The Federal Government has a responsibility to act responsibly and prevent price gouging, and I urge a vote on my legislation.

#### PRESIDENT SHOULD VETO SUPPLEMENTAL SPENDING BILL

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, with a record deficit and national debt, now is the time for Congress to practice fiscal discipline, even where funding the war on terror is concerned.

While I have supported our troops and funding the rebuilding and reconstruction efforts along the gulf coast, I could not bring myself to support recent emergency funding legislation that left this House of Representatives at some \$92 billion, including many elements that the President of the United States thought were unnecessary.

Well, if things were bad before, they just got worse. Madam Speaker, the Senate is working on the emergency supplemental bill, and it is now at \$106.5 billion and rising, including such unrelated measures as \$3 million for southern and eastern Kentucky tourism and \$900,000 for Dartmouth College, to name two.

Let us support funding the war on terror and support the families and communities affected by the hurricanes that hit the gulf coast, but let us do it in a fiscally responsible way. This legislation has become a fruit basket of spending unrelated to our war efforts and Katrina; and I say plainly, Mr. President, veto this bill.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. DRAKE). Members should direct remarks to the Chair and not to the President.

#### REACH OUT TO MODERATE PEOPLE OF IRAN

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, anyone following the news knows that tension is growing in our relations with Iran. But as we consider our response to this situation, let us be clear about where the problem lies.

The problem is with the radical new leadership of Iran, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and his extremist regime. It is not with the good people of Iran, who have shown openness to freedom and moderation.

Historically, Iran has been a center of culture and civilization. Millions of Iranians still value these things and seek a future with greater freedom and individual liberty. We must be reaching out to these people through diplomacy, person-to-person diplomacy and other ways to encourage their desire for freedom.

The idea of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of a leader who calls the Holocaust a myth and openly says Israel should be wiped off the map is unthinkable and must be addressed. But the best way to do that is through reaching out to the moderate people of Iran who want better for their country than the current regime, not through military action.

#### MEDICARE SUCCESS STORY

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share yet another success story from a senior who is saving money with Medicare prescription drug coverage. These stories are plentiful, and it is important we share them with the American people so seniors will know the truth. They could be saving thousands of dollars a year with Medicare part D.

Mrs. Cornelia Kinnebrew lives in Rome, Georgia, in my district. Like many seniors, Ms. Kinnebrew's medication costs were astronomical. She was paying more than \$700 a month for her drugs, a huge portion of her monthly budget.

Well, after contacting my office, Ms. Kinnebrew is signed up for a Medicare prescription drug plan. We discovered that she qualified for the additional help available to our low-income seniors, and I am incredibly pleased to report that now, with Medicare part D, Cornelia Kinnebrew pays only \$37 a month for her prescription drugs. That is a savings of nearly \$700 every month.

Madam Speaker, the initial enrollment deadline for Medicare part D is May 15. With 3 weeks left to sign up, it is extremely important we put people over politics and help ensure all seniors have the opportunity to enroll.

My message to seniors is this: with Medicare part D, the D stands for deliverers. The President and this Republican-led Congress have done just that. Take advantage of it.

#### GAS PRICES

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, gas prices are the topic right now, so